

NSC BRIEFING

17 June 1954

INDONESIA

- I. Conflict between Defense Minister Iwa Kusumasumastri and pro-Western elements of the army still continues. Last month's arrest of Sidik Kertipati, minor leftist party member of parliament, is latest incident.
  - A. Sidik a close friend Minister Iwa, fellow-member of Progressive Party.
  - B. Was arrested 1 May on orders Col. Kawilarang, pro-West commander of III Territory in West Java (which includes Indonesian capital, Djakarta).
    1. Charged with aiding Communist insurgents
    2. Evidence based on interrogation of surrendered members of Communist guerrillas, "Bamboo Spears" and documents seized in Sidik's home.
  - C. Kawilarang said to be co-operating with Socialist Party leaders in building strongest case possible against Sidik.
    1. Plans also being laid for arrest of more Iwa supporters.
  - D. Iwa reportedly has made strenuous efforts obtain Sidik's release.
    1. Direct pressure on Kawilarang has apparently failed.

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- F. Iwa seriously handicapped by fact most officers in vital West Java region are loyal to Kawilarang.
- G. Seems probable, however, that settlement struggle between Iwa and ranking army officers will require intervention President Sukarno, who heretofore has invariably supported Iwa.

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II. President Sukarno, who is the strongest single unifying force in Indonesia, has been progressively isolating himself from nearly all political groups except the National Party (PNI) and its leftist supporters [REDACTED]

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25X1X

A. Sukarno believes that success of democracy in Indonesia as he conceives it, is dependent upon his continuance in office which he cannot visualize if the PNI should lose the elections which are presently scheduled for 1955.

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B. [REDACTED] Sukarno has condoned and even encouraged PNI efforts to purge opposition office holders.

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1. [REDACTED] PNI had laid careful plans to rig the elections through its control of electoral and administrative machinery.
2. One manifestation of this control reflected in recent announcement of party symbols to be used in ballots which showed the hammer and sickle as the symbol of the Communist Party (PKI)--which supports the govt--and "those who belong to no political parties."

25X6

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25X1C

- C.  Communist restraint has resulted in "weakening of President's mental defenses against Communist infiltrators."
1. Has become more moderate in criticizing Communists.
  2. Has gone out of the way to receive fellow travelers from abroad.
- D. Vice President Hatta and a few prominent military leaders are only balancing forces remaining.
- E. Recent developments, however, indicate that extreme leftist Defense Minister--hand picked by Sukarno--is making strenuous efforts to undermine officers who oppose the regime, particularly Col. Kwilarang, commander of III Territory in West Java which includes Djakarta.
1. Issue sharpened by military arrest of pro-Communist associate of defense minister on charges of collaborating with Communist insurgents.
  2. Minister's strenuous efforts to obtain friend's release thus far have failed.
  3. Seems probable, however, that struggle between Minister and "hostile" officers will be settled eventually by intervention of Sukarno who has invariably supported the former.